

Remarks

Status of the Claims

The Office objected to Claims 6 and 56 due to certain informalities;

The Office objected to Claims 8, 24-26, 31, 50-52, and 54-56 as dependent on a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base and any intervening claims;

The Office rejected Claims 1-7, 9-23, 27-30, 32-49, and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,778,368 ("Hogan").

Remarks

Objections due to informalities.

Applicant has amended Claim 6 to correctly depend from Claim 5, and submits that the corresponding objection has been cured. Applicant has amended Claim 56 to supply the period missing from the end, and submits that the corresponding objection has been cured.

Objections of Claims 8, 24-26, 31, 50-52, and 54-56 due to dependency on rejected Claims.

Applicant has rewritten Claims 8, 24, 31, 50, 52, 54, and 56 in independent form, each including all the limitations of the base and any intervening Claims. Applicant submits that the corresponding objections have been cured, and that Claims 8, 24, 31, 50, 52, 54, and 56 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 25 depends from Claim 24; Applicant submits that the amendment to Claim 24 also cures the objection to Claim 25, and that Claim 25 is in condition for allowance.

Applicant has amended Claim 26 to depend from Claim 8; curing the objection to Claim 26. Applicant submits that Claim 26 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 51 depends from Claim 50; Applicant submits that the amendment to Claim 50 cures the objection to Claim 51, and that Claim 51 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 55 depends from Claim 54; Applicant submits that the amendment to Claim 54 cures the objection to Claim 55, and that Claim 55 is in condition for allowance.

Rejections of independent Claims 1, 27, 35, and 53.

Applicant has canceled Claims 1, 27, 35, and 53.

Rejections of Claims 2-7, 9-23, 28-30, 32-34, 36-49.

Applicant has amended these Claims to depend from Claims that are now in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that these Claims, depending from and further defining the inventions of allowable base claims, are consequently in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicant has responded to each and every rejection and urges that the Claims as presented are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests expeditious processing to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,



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date

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Feb. 16, 2004

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